

"Man, know thyself."

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THE
PROBLEM OF LIFE

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to Universal Human Progress.

W. J. COLVILLE, EDITOR

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THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

THE INTENTIONS of "THE PROBLEM OF LIFE" are: To present to the public, clear, concise statements of thought relative to all the great religious and social questions of the day; to prove the relation forever existing between mental harmony and physical health, and by such means to assist practically in diminishing the load of sorrow now pressing upon the race; to report and comment upon matters of interest to the general welfare of the race, the world over; to "render unto all their due," and thus oppose no person or party as such; but seek to point out a better way to those who are now sojourning in the darkness of mistake. To review books and pamphlets calculated to enlighten seekers after truth in the various fields of human effort, without respect to person or precedent, holding that a work must be judged by its intrinsic merit, wholly irrespective of the celebrity of the author. Finally, to treat every subject from the standpoint of the higher nature of man, therefore to point the way for an amicable settlement of present differences on the basis of the one Life of which we are all partakers.

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THE SCIENCE OF NOBLE LIVING; THE DIVINITY OF DAILY EFFORT.

A DISCOURSE BY W. J. COLVILLE GIVEN IN BOSTON SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 1892.

"Ah, if our souls but poise and swing
Like the compass in its brazen ring,
Ever level and ever true
To the toil and the task we have to do,
We shall sail securely, and safely reach
The Fortunate Isles on whose shining beach
The sights we see and the sounds we hear
Will be those of joy, and not of fear."

THE above exquisite lines from Longfellow's "Building of the Ship," can suggest to us all some most salutary considerations. Among poets we can scarcely find one whose inspirations are sublimer or whose deductions are more intensely practical than those of Longfellow, who by universal consent stands foremost among the bards of America. In Longfellow's verse there is a charming naturalness which strikes us at once as in full accord with the fresh young life of a growing stalwart republic.

Longfellow was a typical American of the highest type. Being neither soldier nor merchant, he did not represent the striving, bustling, unsettled elements always so rife in a rising country; but as poet, thinker, and philosopher, his task was to think out in delightful song the destiny both of the nation and of the individual soul. To that glorious work he brought an intellect of singular brilliance and a heart of pure and tender love. Among his best compositions none seems to us more forcible than that from which our present text is taken. It deservedly ranks with "Footsteps of Angels," the "Psalm of Life," and "Excelsior," which are learned by every boy and girl at school, and recited everywhere on every available occasion; and like them, it is full of deep, earnest spiritual teaching. One would have to travel the wide world over to discover any poem fuller of ennobling sentiment than "The Building of the Ship."

The poet commences his tale, an obvious yet subtle allegory, by taking us to the seashore, where a venerable master and an

eager youth are planning a beautiful ship, which when completed and launched by the youth is to entitle him to the hand of the young and beautiful daughter of the master. The young people are tenderly attached to each other. The youth works bravely and well, as those work who see before them a bright, happy future to be reached only by constant, indefatigable exertion, but most surely certain to be attained if the work be faithfully completed. All goes well and soon the ship is finished and committed to the surf as the bride of the bounding ocean. At the time when the vessel is given to the waters the marriage of the young man and maiden takes place, and it is at the conclusion of the service that the bridegroom utters those telling words which constitute the text for this discourse.

Longfellow strikes the keynote to the whole symphony of life when he says:

"It is the heart and not the brain
That to the highest doth attain,
And he who followeth Love's behest,
Far excelleth all the rest."

The stately and graceful ship, launched so gaily on a bright and happy wedding morn, was a product of zeal born of affection and inseparable from it. The whole secret of a noble, happy, useful life is the secret of loving and thus glorifying one's vocation. The mechanical work of building a vessel, prosaically considered, is a dreary, toilsome affair. The collection of materials involves hard labor; piecing them together, adjusting all the parts to the whole, severely taxes both brain and muscle; and if the ship-builder sees nothing but the rafters before him as he plies his task, and has no object in view but earning the pittance which suffices to keep body and soul together, the work is but a tread-mill occupation for the prolongation of an earthly existence little better than a term of misery.

Is life worth living? this is a question which has puzzled philosophers and always will. If *earthly* existence is the total sum of man's conscious individual career, is it worth living? Those of happy, sunny nature will assuredly answer, Yes; those of morose and melancholy temper, who see only the dark side of terrestrial existence can hardly be expected to answer other than No. This

present term of existence need not be gloomy. This world need not be a hell for any of us; but as our sources of enjoyment are really inward and not external, we sigh in vain for outward happiness, for happiness is a goddess who reigns within the human breast, and who perhaps oftener presides at the humble table of the peasant than at the sumptuous board of monarch or millionaire.

Nothing can be falseer than a philosophy which teaches man to rely on circumstances and on others instead of self. Self-reliance is a virtue we all need to cultivate, even though, when dissociated from dependence on Deity, it often degenerates into folly, ending in the destruction of our hopes. Let every youth and maiden setting out in life realize that they are called upon to build the ships in which they must sail, either to "Fortunate Isles" of peace and joy where all desire eventually to land, or else to pitiless rocks and treacherous quicksands of despair. Immediately we renounce the fatal error of belief in a special private destiny appointed for us each by God, we cease to attribute the consequences of our own follies to Deity, or even to fate or fortune. Directly we eschew that fatalistic pessimism which teaches nothing higher than stoical resignation to the inevitable, and embrace the salutary truth that man is the arbiter of his own fate, the maker of his own destiny, we shall cease to cry out against hard luck and ill-fortune, and wisely begin attributing unhappiness and defeat to our own error and mismanagement.

We do not deny ancestral influence, heredity, or "Karma," but our modified acceptance of such a doctrine as that of karmic or hereditary influence causes us to sympathize far more with that aspect of Buddhism which encourages all to work so as to shorten the number of their incarnations, than with that which dwells depressingly upon the influence of the past, leading us to feel that our future progress is simply an inevitable unrolling of the scroll of destiny, which can not be made to unwind any faster or slower than its predestined wont, no matter how energetic we may be in endeavoring to accelerate its movements.

Two conclusions seem necessarily reached, if we study the scheme of the universe from the standpoint of Divine Equity. One is that one must of necessity undergo as much discipline and make as much effort as another, if all are at length to arrive at an equal

point of perfection; the other is that we are allowed to take our own time in doing our work; we can hasten its accomplishment by energy or we can retard it by loitering and carelessness. Our mistakes are not foreordained; our backslidings and wanderings are not predestined. All that is predestined is that we do a certain amount of work for a certain amount of wage. We may well compare this world to a factory in which all are working by the piece. As soon as our task is finished we can draw our salary and leave the workshop, but if we leave the scene of effort with less accomplished than we might have performed, we cannot draw the same amount as though we had worked industriously from sunrise to sunset, intent upon attending to duty, no matter how alluring the temptation to neglect our task. When Gen. Gordon was in Africa commanding the British troops in their encounters with Mohammedan soldiery, he was frequently struck with the wonderful influence their fatalistic doctrine exerted over them. According to Mohammed, Allah ordains every event of individual life. Mussulmans declare that every event is written in the book of ordination before it occurs. Thus, if they are predestined to defeat in a certain battle, no possible exertion on their part can save them from discomfiture, while on the other hand, if they are foreordained to victory, no possible influence can compass their defeat. Gordon says at times these Mohammedans would be terrible in battle; their impassioned earnestness, their calm determination, based on an unalterable certainty of victory, would strike terror into the hearts of their opponents, no matter how brave and well armed the English rank and file might be. At other times they fell an easy prey to the opposing forces, for they would almost let their weapons drop from their grasp as the dread conviction possessed them that Allah, instead of fighting for them, was enlisted on the other side.

A similar experience was that of the French troops headed by Jeanne d'Arc, the world-famed Maid of Orleans. When she was consciously acting under divine direction, when celestial voices impelled her on, and she doubted not the sacredness of her mission and the certainty of its successful termination, the opposing armies fell before the troops which she commanded like chaff before the whirlwind. But no sooner did she act without the sanction of these supernal directors than her defeat was a foregone conclusion,

and it was an easy task for the English troops to capture her and put her to a cruel death.

There is then a distinct advantage and also a decided disadvantage arising from belief in any phase of fatalism, for it must be self-evident to all thinkers that a positive conviction that an enterprise must inevitably succeed because God has ordained its success must so nerve the hands and cheer the hearts of those conducting it that no such word as failure can find place in their vocabularies; while nothing can possibly be so distressful as the thought that we are pursuing a forlorn hope, fighting against an inevitable destiny altogether too strong for us. All half truths such as fatalism, must necessarily act in this double manner. The truth in fatalism is that "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will,"—the sense that an eternal purpose presides over all things and is fulfilled in all. "Whatever is, is right." The large view of these immortal words of Pope taken by every sound philosopher is inspiring in the extreme, but the narrow view, which cramps the energies of man, reducing him to the level of a mere automaton, has always been sternly repudiated by wise moral teachers.

To return to the gallant ship launched on the seething waters. Let winds and tides represent destiny, and successful navigation the result of human achievement through endeavor. Man, to-day, has little, if any, more control over winds and tides than had those ancient navigators who launched their wretched hulks upon the treacherous seas, utterly at the mercy of winds and waters. When Columbus set sail from Europe for the Western Hemisphere, he had about as much command over winds and waves as the most expert of modern seamen. In the old days of sailing vessels the winds and waves were no more unwilling to yield to the command of man than they are to-day. How, then, has it come to pass that in all seasons of the year, in all weathers, the splendid steamships of the various transatlantic companies can cross from New York or Boston to Liverpool, Southampton, Antwerp, Havre or Bremen in eight or nine days, as the case may be? In particularly trying weather one or two days more may be required for the passage than when winds and tides are favorable, but you all know how much surprise and consternation is felt if a vessel is more than one

or two days overdue, and when a longer delay occurs, it usually appears that some neglect or mismanagement on the part of officers or crew has occasioned the suspense and possible danger. Steam represents man's victory over circumstances; winds and tides, sunshine and clouds represent circumstances or environments over which man has as yet no control.

To every young man and woman we offer three pieces of advice. First, Set to work to find your vocation; Second, Attend to your business with all your might, and dignify even the humblest calling by making it a means to some end higher than that of simply providing you with means of material subsistence; Third, Rely on God, and on yourself as the instrument through which your success will be achieved. Self-reliance is a great virtue when coupled with dependence upon the Supreme Being; but a bragging, boastful attitude, expressed in such insane remarks as "I am superior to all my brethren;" "My will is stronger, my talent greater than any other's," is not manly or womanly self reliance; it is the foolish impudence of the intolerable egotist whose pride is the sure precursor of a heavy fall. To trust in God in the right way is to recognize the glorious truth so frequently overlooked, that man is not life in himself, but the recipient of life from the Infinite Spirit in whom and by whom and through whom are all things; but, while man does not in reality live from himself, but from the Eternal, he appears to live from himself, because the divine life flowing into him is the only life he has, and consciousness of selfhood is the only means at his disposal for acquainting himself with Universal Spirit. Such a view of life teaches us that God gives life to all most liberally, that all alike are children of Eternal Spirit, and therefore equal as to their essential or most interior nature. What matters it whether the outward appearance be that of the Negro, Malay, Mongolian, Caucasian or Red man? One race has produced just as noble samples of mankind as another.

Shakespeare truly says, "All the world's a stage." We are all actors playing often many parts even in a single lifetime. When the theater is dark and empty, and we have retired to our respective homes in the unseen world, what will it matter whether the role we assumed was that of prince or peasant, queen or flower-seller? A talented artist is just as effective, and displays just as

much talent in the humblest as in the grandest part. All earthly honors and distinctions are false and meretricious; in spirit-life the sole matter of importance is whether we have done our duty faithfully and played our part well, no matter what character may have been assigned to us for interpretation.

On the stately, massive ship so graphically described by Longfellow, how many positions must be filled by able men, all adapted to their several parts. The captain is indeed in command of the crew, but how can he direct the vessel unaided? As well expect an architect to put up every stone of the edifice he designs without the assistance of joiners, masons, bricklayers, glaziers, and all the host of workmen necessary to the completion of the pile, as under-rate the importance of those who in the ship of State fill subordinate positions and do humble work. If there is one defect in modern culture more serious than another, it is that certain lines of effort are singled out as gentlemanly and ladylike, while others are contemptuously regarded as degrading. It was not formerly so in America. In the early days of the republic all put their heads together and worked hand in hand to build the noble ship of State, before the god, Mammon, was set up for popular adoration, and the merchant prince and millionaire became the idols of the populace.

Simple, unpretending homesteads tended far more to develop genuine greatness than the gilded palaces of modern days, and we venture to affirm, without fear of successful contradiction, that far more genuine happiness dwells beneath the thatched roof of a simple village cottage than beneath the gilded cupola of the palace of the money king.

But while we must never be blind to the nobility of the village blacksmith at his forge, we must be careful that we give no place to the demon envy, which threatens to imperil free institutions and desolate the land. We have every sympathy for those who are seeking to redress just grievances in honorable ways, but law and order must be maintained, and to that end mutiny and insurrection must be put down with a powerful hand. Capital punishment is, in our eyes, an offence against justice; even imprisonment for life is a penalty man has no moral right to inflict on his offending brother, often goaded to desperation by the frightful anomalies of so-called civilized society. But remembering that good alone can

vanquish error, let us seek by higher moral education to put an end to unnecessary social inequalities by inciting all so to regard life that it shall appear to every one as a stepping-stone to fuller and more glorious life beyond.

Thought can be transmitted without vocal accents or muscular contact; thought is a tremendous power, a mighty force whose scope and influence no tongue can tell. If silent thought be the mighty thing psychological experiments are proving it to be, if thought is the highest agent in overcoming disease and crime, as mental therapeutics abundantly prove, who need be sad and disappointed because in outward seeming his career is not as prosperous as he might well desire? If thought is a substance, if thoughts are things, then, though one's picture never be hung in any gallery on earth until centuries after his body has moldered in the earth, and the old canvas, begrimed with dust and cobwebs, is discovered and extolled when it is hundreds of years too late to compensate the painter in this mundane sphere by filling his ears with plaudits and his pockets with gold,—that despised, forgotten picture, refused by the hanging committee at every exhibition of paintings in the artist's earthly lifetime, may still have been portrayed in heavenly galleries, and when the artist dropped the mortal form may have been the very first object to greet his vision as he entered spirit-life. What matters it, if all exists in thought before it is expressed in matter, how many compositions of the author, poet, or musician be rejected? Sooner or later the world will find them out, and if it does not, heaven has discovered them and utilized them long before the writer or the singer dropped the mortal form. These remarks apply of course only to *soulful* compositions. The mere bread winner who does not love his work can never enjoy spiritual compensation. No cold and calculating effort of brain and hand, without heart, can become immortal. No laborer who works for hire alone, can enter into joy in spheres immortal by reason of worldly scheming for the necessities of earth. To labor to support oneself is reasonable and right enough so far as it goes; to labor to support an aged parent or a delicate brother or sister is much nobler, and the unselfishness which leads one to forget self and work for others, must inevitably entitle the worker to a spiritual reward. But where there is no love of a work, and no

perception of its importance, it lacks all that true dignity and intense vitality which are indispensable to any really successful undertaking.

How often you hear the criticism passed on really fine productions, "Yes, they are magnificent, but they have no life, no soul." Merely sensuous charms soon pall upon the public ear and eye. The palate becomes surfeited, eyes and ears grow tired with simple correctness of outline. You never pay a musician a very high compliment unless you say of him, "He made the instrument speak." You never truly appreciate painter or sculptor unless you discern life in the canvas or marble which has left his hand. We doubt whether a truly great work has ever been performed unglorified by the inspiration of a sublime purpose. We deny that true greatness is ever attainable while the affections lie dormant. Many of the world's greatest artists have had the woman or the man they loved above all others for their model; others have so entered into the innermost recesses of deep spiritual fervor that through religious ecstasy they have been able to portray a loveliness not born of earth. One's ideal, the object of one's purest affections, may be wholly spiritual, or may be robed in earthly form; but unless the ideal be there, and unless there be an overwhelming devotion to and affection for the work to be performed and the end to be attained, there can be no real and therefore no abiding greatness. Correctness, classical beauty, purity of design, faultless rendition, may all be reached, but as the body without the spirit is dead, so all work is less than sublime if it be, spiritually speaking, purposeless.

Why is it that to so many life seems terribly hard and work a curse, when occupation is the greatest blessing? Could an idle universe be a happy one? Can there have ever been a time when man had nothing to do? Work is life, idleness is death. It is not rest that we need in the sense of the cessation of employment; but joy in work, gladness, hope, contentment, and divine assurance which makes every effort a step toward some diviner goal than sense can ever reach. Certain kinds of work do indeed seem to lend themselves far more readily to high thoughts and aims than others, this may be frankly admitted, but the question we desire to settle, Is there any possible situation so demeaning, any work so

vile that it cannot serve the highest of spiritual uses? We know of none, for the outward form is but its *accident*; its *essential* is far removed from its external phase. What temple was ever erected whose foundations, were they to support no superstructure, would be worth the toil expended in excavating earth and laying stone and brick in place. The temple which is to be built thereon alone justifies and compensates the labor of digging the foundation. What picture would be worth the hanging were it only background and thus no genuine picture at all? The work upon the background would be but toil and time expended for nothing were it not for the foreground to be added later, and to which the background, as a servant, is indispensable. In building a ship, do we not build it to navigate the ocean? A ship, as an end, would be the height of folly, a useless and cumbersome representation of wasted energy, but a ship equipped for a distant voyage, with her sails fluttering in the breeze, a ship as a means to an end, is a sight well calculated to inspire the beholder with intensest hope and joy.

Our earthly occupations, the maintenance of mortal forms, the rearing and educating of families, the perpetuation of the innumerable activities of this mundane state, in and of themselves—considered as ends instead of means—are poor and depressing even at their best; but immediately we see, in all the noise and strife of hammers and chisels, the evolution of a great design—the building of a ship whose port is the celestial world—directly we see in every trial and temptation incident to earthly existence a means of transit to a brighter state,—and, best of all, when on the wings of pure and hallowed altruism, forgetful of self, we mount and soar to noble altitudes of spiritual attainment, not because of the bliss accruing to us from our elevated station, but out of devotion to the welfare of our brethren—no necessary work seems sordid, no occupation mean, for we see in each and every enterprise a means of helping forward the car of human progress, and thereby advancing the interests of the common humanity we tenderly and ardently love.

But some will make reply: "All this talk of doing good to others is so much rhapsody—very fine poetry, but utterly impractical as prose. Do you not see how many there are who are shut out entirely by uncontrollable circumstances from all means of

usefulness to others? What can a very poor person do—one who is out of work, who has neither influence nor friends? What can a bed-ridden sufferer do, who has even lost the use of hands, and perhaps of speech and eyesight also? Do you not admit there are cases where we are in the grip of circumstances altogether too strong for us, and against which, if we strike at all, we only beat our hearts out, like birds in captivity wounding their tender breasts against the cruel bars which hold them captive? The free bird can be useful, but what of the bird in forced captivity?"

Our answer to all such questioning is this: if we could but see the power and influence of silent thought continually exerted all around us, we should never again complain, however hard our lot might be. Have not those who have done most for the progress of humanity carried the heaviest burdens? It needs but a tiny glimpse into the invisible realm, in the midst of which, even though unknowingly, we are all now and ever living, to silence every doubt, banish every fear, and change wails of anguish into peans of rejoicing. We have pictured, to enforce our moral, the saddest cases of all, and these certainly do not fall to the lot of the majority; still there is enough in every life (even the most prosperous from a worldly point of view), to raise the question again and again, "Is life really worth the living?" Rev. M. J. Savage has often expressed himself as glad to have lived here, even if there be no hereafter. Such a state of mind is very enviable, but Mr. Savage is in many respects a favored man; his position is a very desirable one in many particulars; he has many friends and admirers, and does a kind of work which easily persuades the doer of it that if it be well done it must assist in helping the world to grow wiser and better. It has often been a matter for comment that artists and professional men refuse to give up their work when they have earned enough to retire upon; not that they are mercenary, and continue striving to amass more wealth; but that the work itself has more fascination for its devotees than any mere mechanical labor can possibly have. There is something fascinating in law, in medicine, in literature, in art. A man of sixty, with all his faculties alert, can scarcely be content to retire upon his fortune and do nothing for the remainder of his years on earth. He may give his services gratuitously as many do, but he loves his work, therefore

it does not age or worry him; it keeps him young, hale and hearty; but manual labor, unrelieved by any high and holy purpose, is indeed the veriest drudgery, and for this reason the wave of secular education which is now sweeping with such remarkable force over England, France, Germany and America, has perhaps done as much to sadden as to elevate the working man. It has set him to thinking, to aspiring, but it has not taught him to think rightly or to aspire truly, where it has been unaccompanied by a wave of spiritual influence, without which secular education can only lead to discontent and anarchy. Nothing can be more cruel than to stimulate an ambition which cannot be satisfied. If we have no food to offer, do not let us wake the hungry man, who while asleep, is not conscious of the need of food. Let us be careful in all our training of youth, not to raise hopes the probability of whose fulfillment is exceedingly doubtful.

What the world needs to-day is a revelation of the spiritual reality of life so convincing as to lift all the commonplaces of industry into their rightful sphere as part and parcel of the universal plan of social and spiritual evolution. Psychical research, if properly conducted, must inevitably tend toward a realization of the marvelous potency of invisible forces, and thereby lead the mind of the lowly worker to look above the grinding drudgery of earthly labor to its certain consequences in spiritual fulfilment. To be born into this world and go through all its discipline from childhood to old age only to work to keep a treadmill going, is sad enough to make the very angels weep in heaven. But if, as the Apocalypse declares, the multitude whom no man can number in the realms of light and glory presented to the enamored vision of an oriental seer, have reached through effort all that is signified by white robes, golden crowns and harps, and waving palms, then surely the great tribulation or constant friction of earthly life (base metal though it be), when transmuted by that alchemy which finds the philosopher's stone at hand everywhere, is absolutely necessary to the turning out of that incorruptible and glorious gold which means nothing other than a state and condition of soul in which the whole universe appears ineffably bright and glorious.

The most needed lesson for the world to-day is to recognize

universal human equality in the sight of heaven. Some are rich and some are poor, some rule, others are in states of service, and while we are quite prepared to admit that much human inequality is unnecessary and preventable, we can not fail to see that under man's present limitations there must be wide differences in outward rank and station. All that is needed, however, is for the rich to consecrate their wealth to the highest and noblest uses; turn "filthy lucre" into the very gold of heaven; so employ the "mammon of unrighteousness" that it becomes the servant and promoter of righteousness; while the poor need but to feel that despite all their earthly disadvantages, they are still contributing a needed quota to the mass of human effort, and are therefore just as truly necessary to the welfare of the mass as ever the wealthiest and most honored can be.

We can never sanction or uphold a bald materialism which stimulates revolt and misery. The gospel of contentment, not of discontent, is the message of peace and love to all mankind. Why should a king or queen, a duke or duchess be an object of dislike, or be suspected of unworthy motives any more than the humblest domestic in his or her employ? A lady of title and distinction like the noble Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar, who uses rank and wealth in serving truth, can do a work in gilded salons which could not be accomplished elsewhere; but however sacred and noble such a work may be, it is no nobler, no more sacred than that of the humblest toiler in the bowels of the earth.

The great secret of success is the open secret of fidelity and earnestness. We must be ever faithful and ever true, not only to our outward tasks and our employers, but most of all to a glorious ideal which should never be absent from our thoughts while we are working. Let our hands do whatever we find for them to do with cheerful alacrity, but let us be ever on our guard lest we use our hands alone. Domestic work and every kind of manual labor is lightened when the mind and heart are occupied with pursuits in which the hands can take no part. The chambermaid who sings about her work, the bootblack who whistles merrily between whiles as he polishes the shoes of the passer-by, is sure to succeed as the boy or girl never can, the monotony of whose work is never relieved by any diversion of thought from the dull routine of toil. If

pleasant subjects for meditation, innocent and agreeable distractions can thus relieve and lighten toil, what shall we say of the mental attitude of those whose eyes are ever fixed on the heavenly goal, who see the light of heaven all around them here below, and hear words of gratitude from those to whose faces their kindly services have brought smiles of joy? For those who can find the secret of true happiness everywhere in such thought and prayer as never fails to bless and sanctify every object with which they come in contact, all work has an esoteric value. Its exoteric form is well-nigh lost sight of in the vivid sense of something impalpable and incomprehensible to sense, yet ever present to spirit.

We should never look for *outward* success if we desire to be truly useful and genuinely happy. Longfellow wisely tells us of leaving footprints on the sands of time, marks which shall be guides to those who come after us; he rightly considers it sublime to so work that future generations shall be the better for our having lived and acted our part on the stage of earth, but he does not leave us without confidence of the hereafter.

The climax of the Alpine boy's effort is grandly reached in the last lines of "Excelsior:"

"There in the twilight, cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,"

well describes the body of the gallant youth which perished in the Alpine snow. Dogs found the body and monks buried it.

"While from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell like a falling star, Excelsior,"

conveys a glimpse of the glory of that higher life upon which the traveler to the land of immortality has entered, and what is the word breathed downward through vibrant space from that immortal height invisible to mortal eyes? Surely none other than the watchword of his entire career. He had then been wise and not foolish when he had spurned with tear-dimmed eye the importunities of earthly affection in its most beguiling form. He had shown true wisdom, then, when he had turned a deaf ear to the would-be sage injunctions of the worldly wise who had sought to deter him from his utopian purpose. It had indeed paid him well to scale those dizzy heights if he might at length become a star vocal with

celestial melody, breathing the magic word, "Excelsior" to lead upward and onward the toiling multitudes below, climbing as he had aforetime climbed up the jagged steepes and over the piercing rocks to that summit which is revealed only to souls triumphant, and at which material sciolism scoffs in the pretended livery of science.

Let us one and all take heart afresh from the hallowed examples of the "saints" of all ages, remembering that fidelity to conviction, love of good for its own sake, and love to all mankind are enough to make every life sublime and every future glorious.

If you would make your lives indeed successful, and strive to become great in an immortal sense, do not try your hand first at one thing and then at another, unless absolutely compelled to do so, but seek to discover your own particular vocation. Do one thing and do it earnestly; do not let a single occupation so monopolize you as to render you unfit for social life and diversified enjoyment; but rally all your forces round a central point. Have an object in life, and that a noble one, and if so circumstanced that your hands have to perform the humblest tasks while your thoughts soar to some lofty altitude of spiritual attainment, never divorce the actual from the ideal, but idealize the commonplace by throwing into your outward endeavor a psychic virtue which will make even the hem of your garment emanate health in blessing to all around you. Thus, and thus only, can you exalt the humblest toil till it becomes occupation worthy of an archangel; thus only, but thus most surely, can you lift your load of care and lighten the burden of your neighbors by so living in two worlds at once that earthly tasks are never fatiguing, but contravise refreshing by reason of their appearing as needful means for the outworking of a celestial purpose, the magnitude of which eternity can alone reveal.

It is highly important that Mental Healers in particular should realize the enormous value of well-directed intention. The aim of our efforts essentially determines the effect they must produce.

THE DIVINE SCIENCE OF HEALTH.

BY F. J. MILLER.

LESSON III.—TRUTH.

Jerusalem shall be called a city of the truth ; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.—ZECH. viii., 13.

Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.—JOHN viii., 32.

Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak : and he will show you things to come.—JOHN xvi., 13.

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren.—I. PETER i., 22.

IN our former lessons we have seen the Oneness of God in His universe, also made our affirmations of man's perfection and harmony in the One Life, we now come to consider the import of Truth which will make us free and purify our souls unto the love of universal brotherhood of man and harmony with all creation.

In sifting truth it is very important that we should not be governed by the individuality which surrounds ourselves ; but discard from our vista all material aspects which force themselves upon us and produce their own erroneous ideas, which misplace and dwarf the truth, according to the lights and shadows we put upon it. Truth in its transcendentalism must ignore all error and every ray that would deflect or reflect truth into any other garb than that of its Infinitude. There is an Infinitude in truth which supersedes the finite thought. The finite thought is born into error, raised in error, and believing all this error to be true how can we have any adequate knowledge of Infinite truth ? Just as the astronomer has to calculate time in all its bearings, gathering up the mean time and sending forth this mean time as the true time, so we must fully weigh all the material surroundings of so-called truth before we can arrive at the mean truth sent forth in Infinite Love. God is love and love is truth, and in speaking from the standpoint which I now am, I speak from that undeviating Principle of truth—God in Christ truth—Christ truth in God. There is no truth outside of God and His idea. Whatever we may think, in this material existence, to be truth, can bear no adequate

measure to truth by the side of the real and living principle of truth, for, we in our own material surroundings often think we have reached the concept of truth, only to perceive that we have arrived at error, and error and truth being opposites cannot amalgamate. Truth must produce the subject of thought as also the object of thought, and the subject must not view the object through the lenses of individuality or he will clothe it with that individuality in which he garbs it in his own opinion.

Truth must be sought after in humility of thought and abandonment of all illusive ideas of the physical. Truth must be sought after in the desire to attain it for its true goodness. It must be sought after, under the guidance of that Infinite wisdom. The Principle of truth, God, the Perfect.

Truth is endowed with unalienable rights, and it is of these rights we want to speak. Truth bears on its banner the laws of freedom; Christ, Truth, came to abolish all slavery of soul and body, for he whom the Son sets free, is free indeed.

Truth places man in his true position. It gives him a freedom of birthright from all hereditary disease. It acknowledges him to be a child of God and a joint heir with Christ, not a subject to the mortal ailments by which he surrounds himself. It acknowledges mind to be the seat of motive power within us and that this mind emanates from the One, Real, Eternal, Infinite Father Spirit with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning. Mind in its free agency from the hands of its Creator, forms its own individual character, and in its individuality has been too apt to call Good, Evil and Evil, Good: but these two opposites, good and evil, can never mingle in the same fountain, Eternal Life, for the same fountain cannot send forth sweet and bitter water, health and sickness, life and death. The march of truth must ever bear on its banner the march of progress; slow may some be to let go old opinions; slow they may be to put aside old beliefs; but truth in its march must ever rally to its standard an increasing number; few they may be at first, but the few faithful followers, who in their faithfulness will turn aside from the voice of many gods (Errors), will be like a little leaven, leavening the whole of their surroundings. Truth cannot be proclaimed where error reigns triumphant, without, as it were, peals of thunder awakening in

loud accents the errors of belief and setting mind bound in its prison bondage free from all its bondages of sin and unbelief, darkness and illusion.

Mind is our master, and it is our prerogative to use that master for our liberty and freedom, though when we yield to the voice or thought of sickness, we use it to enslave ourselves. God, the Eternal Life, has not exiled man, mind from Himself; but has created him and given him a mind after His own image and likeness; endowed him with unrealized capabilities and possibilities, and he, man, can never change his identity of life with God however much he may reason to the contrary in suffering and sickness.

Transcendental Spiritual Physiology teaches us a truth that this essence of life which gives us life, is perfect, and in its perfection there can be no discord, for God, the Perfect Principle, cannot create imperfection, and our imperfections are images of our own arising from a wrong mode of thinking.

The world with all its harbingers of false beliefs tells us we have discords and tries to make these discords permanent by admitting sin, sickness and death as necessary realities or a part of our very essence, being a discipline from God and thus imaging a God after mortal thought in regarding it as necessary to suffer pain and sickness for our salvation, whereas pain and sickness are only results of a wrong way of thinking. Harmony and discord can never amalgamate, where one reigns the other must be subservient; so where error of understanding is nourished, thoughts cannot spiritualize.

Harmony and beauty are not of the finite world's creation, they are of mind, Life Eternal, and dwelt forever in the Eternal Mind before man was thought into being. Nothing can exist without this Eternal Mind, therefore all secondary causes are only effects and must be referred back to the One Great Cause, God the Eternal Principle and Father of All.

Transcendental Spiritual Physiology teaches us the truth, that a soul unfolded to receive truth can come into vital communion with God through following the example of our Master, Christ, Truth. In this vital communion we cannot lack any good thing. Sickness is neither good nor real, so cannot proceed from God, if it does, why do we try to put it away from us? It is the effects of

sin, and this we consciously acknowledge in our acts, though we disallow it in words. All God gives us we surely ought to desire to hold fast. Look at our inconsistencies; we say sickness is permitted or sent to discipline us; we acknowledge discipline to be good, yet we endeavor by all material means to put the discipline away. Let us rather seek to put the cause away. How often we hear it said: "If God wills, I should like to be restored to health."

Did God in His Eternal Wisdom, Infinite Goodness ever will us to keep an evil thing?

Is sickness and death of the will of God?

Certainly not; for Christ came to do the will of His Father and wherever He found sickness, with its subject willing to be healed, He healed them. The latter, death, He overcame in His own body for our example.

If Christ thus worked against the will of His Father, He must necessarily have frustrated that will, and this He could not and would not do, for He tells us a house divided against itself cannot stand.

Truth from the platform of Transcendental Spiritual Physiology is progressive, ever tending upward to the One Perfect Principle, God, pressing toward the prize of our high calling in Christ Truth, cultivating the fruits of the Spirit as described by Paul. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith being renewed in the Spirit of our Mind from dead works (sin, sickness, delusions, etc.), to serve the Eternal God in the glorious liberty of Gospel Freedom.

Man being born into the condition of materialism, educated in the error of materiality, discovers as this Transcendental Spiritual, Physiological Truth presents itself to the mind that the old things must pass away as illusive, before the new things can be understood; the cup of error must be emptied before it can be filled with truth.

Error and Truth must always be separate. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree of error; the profitless obtruding branches must be sundered; the worthless fruit must be plucked off to make room for the good seed of the word of truth.

This uprooting, sundering and plucking is invariably productive of suffering; it is no easy thing to lay aside every weight; to

renounce things we have been taught to consider as indispensable for our discipline and well being, and to substitute the easy yoke and light burden Christ, the Truth, gives to all who learn the love of His will and the exceeding greatness of His power to destroy sin, sickness and death.

Though the lesson may be difficult to understand it is, nevertheless, wholesome and comes fraught with the love of the Infinite Unchangeable Father, God, to His child and teaches him his life is not of body but spirit. As light dispels darkness and causes the Creator's works to shine forth arrayed in all the beauteous tints emitted through the varied prismatic rays of the sun, so the light of this Transcendental Truth coming in upon the soul in Transcendental Power from the Son of Righteousness, dispels the works of darkness and error and sheds forth the divine rays of truth, love, peace, harmony, filling the soul with joy and peace in the knowledge that sin, sickness and death were once and can now be vanquished.

Peace and good-will from God became man's inheritance when unto us a child of truth was born, unto us a son of truth was given, and so making man an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

Man walking in the light of truth as viewed from the Science of Spiritual Physiology is not satisfied with its dawn, which only partially discloses the errors of materialism, oftentimes with appearances as beauteous as the cobwebs around the flowers spangled with dew, glittering as diamonds, but desires to step out into the full light of noonday brightness, which reveals things as they are, without shadow, and enables him to discern transcendental value of truth over error, of liberty over bondage, of being children of God rather than servants of sin, of walking in the light of gospel freedom instead of being entangled in the bondage of corruption, of enjoying health rather than being overcome with sickness.

This truth of Spiritual Physiology further reveals to the soul that God created man in His own image and pronounced him good; that love in all its transcendental power is inscribed upon all. Love gives the varied hues to all foliage. Love tints the numerous petals with blendings of gorgeous and delicate colors, causing the tracing to be surprisingly beautiful.

From the platform of Transcendental Spiritual Physiology

man learns that this truth is for all men. God wills not that any should suffer, but that all should be saved from their error.

It is claimed there are differences of opinion in the schools of Mental Healing, but the fundamental doctrine must ever be the same, and when the different schools meet on the same basis there is no real friction, the difference in working being as our Latin grammars express it, "The difference of lovers in the renewal of love." Love worketh no ill, and Mental Healers working from the Science of Truth must work from the foundation of life which is love.

This love teaches us the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, the prejudice of birth and creed must be laid aside. The body must not be the ruler, but be ruled by the higher life projected from within to without and so unlock the prison bars of sense to admit the knowledge of the light of the real light, that the life, health and harmony lying latent within may be brought into exercise and shine forth without.

When we truly understand this science and incorporate it into our being, we shall live under the illumination of divine wisdom, and "let our lights so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven."

Perfect health can only be attained where there is a perfect organism to contain it; the perfect organism can only be attained by perfect thought and the perfect thought is when Spiritual Science complements Material Science. Without this union of the two the triune man cannot be perfected.

The immortal principle in man is the highest type we have in the universe, for man has power to be what he wills to make himself. Love has created him after an Infinite pattern, and when this Science of Truth is understood, man will realize that he is an embodiment of ideas and his physical body is only that which enables him in the travel of his soul through the material, to come into contact with that which he has power given him to control, and his body is neither to be idolized nor neglected, but kept by thought, a fitting instrument for the spirit of God to work in and through.

In this understanding of the science of being we shall learn to discriminate between the true and the false, and if this discrimina-

tion leads us to act up to our highest ideal in thought of what the body should be, we shall be enabled to cast away all fear of man made laws and know that if we surrender all to God, He is abundantly able to take care and provide for all in harmony, love and wisdom.

It is often said man's mission is to do good. To do good is to do that which will best develop him to do good to others, for the more good he cultivates in himself the more good can he bestow.

This teaching of healing includes the highest science of truth, because it finds life in love and not in the mere thought of it. Organic forms are necessary for the manifestation of this life and love, for abstract thought can never manifest if it has nothing to manifest through, therefore we should not ignore the body but glorify, redeem and save it from corruption according to the pattern of our Master, Christ.

To do this we must build on a sure foundation and make every truth practical, not building along one line to fence out another, but adhere at all times to Principle, letting the One Principle teach us the science, *God, the First Great Cause of All*.

What God does, He does well, and the more we wait receptive for Him to accomplish in us, acknowledging in all times of weakness that He is our strength, we shall surely not fail in the achievement of our desires, for from the Book of Books we read: "He shall accomplish the desires of thine heart."

HAPPINESS.

BY HELEN C. BRUSH.

HERBERT SPENCER tells us that the goal towards which the race is ever tending is happiness, the constant evolution of new and higher powers of enjoyment. We are made for happiness and complete satisfaction of being. If we are God's children, created in His image and likeness, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, then we cannot reveal the divine likeness or be conscious of our infinite inheritance until we reflect happiness. God is happiness and without happiness there is no holiness or wholeness, just as there is not happiness without holiness.

Christ said to His disciples a few days before the crucifixion : "These things have I spoken unto you that your joy might be full," "Your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you." This is the normal life of a child of God. Heaven is perfect happiness and heaven is not a place but a state and must be realized here and now. "Other world," says Emerson, "there is no other world, now or nowhere is the whole fact."

Heaven must be realized here and now, yet by the word must I do not imply obligation as much as privilege. We are created for happiness and we can be very sure that when the divine will is done we shall be perfectly happy. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness," the likeness of God, male and female, the dual expression of Godhead.

There is a vital truth involved just here which must be recognized in all divine ideals of happiness, the great truth of heavenly marriage which is eternal in the heavens and by the realization of which we come to a knowledge of our true individuality.

"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness," and there is no deep abiding satisfaction until this spiritual awakening takes place. The realities of being to which we are asleep are the same to us as if they had no existence. When we are aroused from life's oblivion, the soul's sleep, we begin to take cognizance of a new order of life of which the senses alone do not testify. Then it is that we begin to experience something of the joys that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, but which the spirit reveals to the deep desires of the heart.

I think we do not make enough of the gospel of happiness in our teaching. It should be the mainspring of all reform, of all preaching and of all teaching. An action without the spirit of joy and content is as incomplete as any work of art would be when the spirit is perfunctory. If an artist does not love his art, his work is of small profit, and so it is with all living that is really complete and beautiful. Undoubtedly years of effort and sacrifice lie back of a noble work of art, but even the sacrifices have in them a deep element of joy which the true artist would not exchange for any of the so-called pleasures of the world. Thus it should be in all our aspirations for holiness.

Holiness is wholeness or perfect happiness, and for the joy

that is set before us, in the confident trust that the fulfilment of every desire is included in the Kingdom of Heaven, we gladly, not sadly, seek God's will day by day, and with the trust of little children are assured that it is also our will. "Delight thyself in the Lord and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart."

BOOK REVIEWS.

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* * *

DR. GEO. DUTTON, Dean of Vermont Medical College, and author of "Dutton's Illustrated Anatomy," has recently brought before the world a SMALL VOLUME that seems destined to effect a GREAT REVOLUTION in the practice of medicine. It is entitled "Consumption and Rheumatism," and puts the control of these complaints—not hitherto understood even by the profession, *into the hands of its readers*. The cause and cure of these maladies is plainly stated in the book, and no one who reads can fail to be convinced that the author HAS REALLY FOUND and clearly explained the cause, cure and means of prevention of Consumption and Rheumatism. It is a scientific statement *based on logic and well known facts*. The treatment is simple and rational, and no poisonous drugs are required.

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* * *

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* * *

W. J. COLVILLE is in Washington, D. C. during April and May. His classes are being held at rooms of Mrs. Nina Hughes, 519 7th Street, N.W. Miss H. M. Young is there taking subscriptions for PROBLEM OF LIFE.

ONESIMUS TEMPLETON.

A PSYCHICAL ROMANCE BY W. J. COLVILLE.

"O could I tear the veil away, and seize the answer while I pray."

CHAPTER I.—ON THE THRESHOLD.

ON a bright summer evening in 1887, a party of friends were gathered on the balcony in front of an old-fashioned but comfortable house on Sycamore Avenue, almost in the heart of the business centre of New York. The house, though a very large and roomy one, attracts but little attention from the busy throng, as it is situated on one of those little frequented thoroughfares which still remain as mementoes of the old Dutch settlement of a by-gone day.

No. 312 Sycamore Avenue is at least one hundred years old, and has a wonderful, though but little known history. Like many residences of similar type, it has the reputation of being haunted, and for that reason the present tenant, Dr. Bernard Maxwell, is allowed to occupy a house of twenty-three rooms on payment of an

annual rent of \$750. The owner is a quaint old German with astrological proclivities, and though he is rarely in the city, between proprietor and tenant a feeling of generous friendship subsists though the two men are about as unlike in appearance, disposition and sentiment as two human beings can well be.

Gerald Gustav Mackenberger (the owner of the property) is a man over sixty, delighting in solitude and given over to the most ardent advocacy of stellar fatalism, while his tenant, Dr. Maxwell, is a handsome, cheerful, healthy man of forty, looking scarcely more than thirty. On the eventful evening when our story opens, Dr. Maxwell, a rising physician of the Electric School was entertaining a party of friends from Vermont, prominent among whom might have been discerned the striking and by no means unpleasant figure of the Rev. Onesimus Templeton, pastor of the Baptist Church at Saddlerock, Vermont. Mr. Templeton was the possessor of a face which could not but attract attention, for though not beautiful, it was strong and earnest, and the eyes shone with a yearning, pleading light, as though an unsatisfied but aspiring soul was ever reaching through them to catch some knowledge from the heavenly spheres as yet denied it. In general appearance Mr. Templeton might be described as tall (five feet, ten inches or thereabouts), slender, narrow-chested, and inclined to stoop: hair and eyes very dark: hands small and delicate for one so tall, but not lacking in nervous power or sinuous determination. Raising his voice above the voices of his companions, who were all buzzing together after the manner of people gathered outside a drawing-room window after dinner on a summer's night, his whole attitude one of earnestness and deep conviction—the reverend Onesimus, addressing a portly lady at his side, exclaims: "My dear Mrs. O'Shannon, I tell you there never was and there never can be such a phenomenon as the one you have just described. The law of nature renders it impossible, unless (lowering his voice to an awe-struck, and certainly impressive undertone), which, heaven forbid, some imp of darkness should have been permitted to read the thought in your misguided daughter's mind."

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Templeton," replied the lady thus vehemently and awfully addressed, "if you are going to insinuate that my daughter Matilda is in league with the Evil One, you may

as well stop your endeavors to convert me to your opinions on any subject; for a better, purer girl than my child you won't find this side the Atlantic, though I do say it, who being her mother should let others sound her praises."

"What's all this loud talking about between you two this evening," breaks in a cheery, rich, round voice, and Dr. Bernard Maxwell turning an amused glance on the excited combatants who were evidently amusing the passers-by, suggests that for the present, at least, all heated discussions on psychology shall be abandoned, and the evening devoted to more rational and edifying enjoyment, "for, (said the good doctor, smiling), when any two persons set out to convince each other by means of verbal strife, no possible progress in the work of mutual conviction can be made, as the needful conditions for making ideas plain to the understanding are of necessity absent, when either party is excited or in the least belligerent."

By way of turning the subject into a more attractive and gracious channel, without, however, altering the tide of the discourse, Dr. Maxwell (who was a brilliant conversationalist as well as a man of rare scientific and literary attainment), began to relate an incident of his recent voyage from Paris on the magnificent steamer, *La Gascogne* of the justly celebrated *Transatlantique* line. He spoke as follows:

"As I was sitting on deck one gorgeous evening in May, the sun slowly sinking beneath the waters as one never sees it set on land, I heard, or thought I heard a low, sweet, girlish voice whispering in my ear, 'Bernard, take care, I implore you, or the electric battery for which you paid 6,000 francs in Paris will be utterly destroyed. I can see where it is, if you cannot!' The voice, and more than that, the thrill accompanying the mystic utterance, so powerfully impressed me that I was being addressed by Heloise De Montmarte (the daughter of the dearest friend I have in all the world, and the man to whom I owe almost all my present success in my life's undertakings), that I hastened to my stateroom, and immediately discovered that my most valuable instruments and apparatus were in immediate danger of ruin by water. Hastily calling a steward, who quickly stopped the leakage from the wash bowl, I just prevented the water from soaking into the very place

of all others from which I was particularly anxious to exclude all dampness. Ruminating on this extraordinary incident, I returned to my folding chair on deck, and resuming my old position, gazing out upon the water which the moon's soft rays were just beginning to glorify, I fell to meditating on the wonderfully complex problem of mental interaction never wholly absent from the minds of students of the nervous systems of men and animals, which has been for many years my specialty. As I pondered with ever increasing surprise upon this most timely experience which enabled me in the very nick of time, to save my battery from serious injury, I saw a thin blue cloud cross the sky, and from this cloud (apparently of ether), small but intensely bright electric sparks proceeded. Thinking it might be merely an optical delusion, I rubbed my eyes and looked again, determined this time not to be mistaken, when a soft, silvery laugh sounded at my elbow, and the clear, sweet tones of Heloise De Montmarte's peculiarly liquid and unmistakeable voice sounded clearly enough to me, though I am convinced no other person heard any sound. She said, 'Why, Bernard, have you forgotten what papa told you when we parted that I should always be able to warn you when anything specially needed your attention? and here I am to fulfil my father's word.'

"Almost dumbfounded, I answered her in thought, my lips, however, moved but in inarticulate utterance: 'But pray tell me where you are now and what you are doing?' No sooner had I given the words (mentally) to the ether, than a reply came close to my ear: 'Why, here, of course, talking to you. Papa's entertaining company in our salon, and I've retired early; my body is slumbering as peacefully as usual in my own room in the house you know so well, 33 Avenue de l'Imperatrice, but I can't stay any longer now, so good-bye, Bernard, and don't forget the alligator.' With these words the voice became silent and the mysterious presence had vanished from my side. I was alone, intensely alone it seemed after this experience, though the deck was well filled with passengers walking slowly and talking quickly as steamer passengers usually do on a balmy moonlight night in Spring."

"Oh, do tell us about the alligator," broke in Lydia O'Shannon (a graceful girl of eighteen summers), "I do so love queer pets Is there an alligator in the house, and how did you get him?"

"Well (said Dr. Maxwell, laughing), if you are a good girl, you shall see him to morrow; he's asleep now in my aunt's bath-tub; he and she are great friends. Prof. De Montmarte gave him to me three years ago when we were travelling together in Florida. He seems to have grown up as a member of our family, never snaps or tries to bite, but why should he, when we treat him kindly and hold him under due restraint; is it not man's prerogative to hold the lower creation in subjection? What say *you* to this, Mr. Templeton, does the theology of the Baptist Church tolerate so much of theosophy?

"I really cannot decide such a question without giving it long and prayerful consideration," responded the minister addressed, "but anyway, I shall be delighted to see your alligator whenever it is convenient to you to show him to me. Can we not step inside now and have a little music? Your electric system of lighting is such an improvement over old methods, we don't dread the heat generated by it."

So saying, Mr. Templeton, accompanied by Mrs. and the Misses O'Shannon, moved into the large, roomy *salon* devoted to almost every conceivable modern use. Elegantly but simply furnished, it portrayed clearly the disposition of the man who rented it; no sign of niggardliness on any hand, neither any presumptuous display; all things solid, substantial, comfortable, cheerful, and withal beautiful.

Just as the friends were composing themselves and assuming a listening attitude, for Miss Lydia O'Shannon was taking her seat at the grand piano, which was one of Levenstein's very best, a bright, handsome boy of twelve devoted to Dr. Maxwell, who had been more than a father to him when he was left an abandoned orphan eight years earlier, threw open the door and announced, "Monsieur Alphonse de Kabriet." Immediately following the announcement of the name, a dashing but not particularly refined young man about twenty-five years of age sauntered into the room, and seated himself without invitation in the most spacious and comfortable arm-chair in the apartment; of course he bowed and murmured "good evening," on entering, but seeing no one present who impressed him with any sense of special dignity, he took no pains to alter his usual nonchalant manner, which seemed to say

more plainly than any words could express: "I honor you by condescending to address you!"

Mons. Alphonse was of French descent, born and educated in New Orleans, accustomed to the theatrical stage and particularly to the box office, almost from infancy; exceedingly conceited, somewhat imposing in general appearance and with an amazing amount of self-possession not unmixed with a good supply of genuine "smartness." By means of these qualifications he had always managed to elbow his way either by sheer effrontery or subtle diplomacy, into the most exclusive circles of society. Having no very decided views on any subject, and knowing how to get on the right side of almost every susceptible person he encountered, extremely versatile in mediocre accomplishments, and speaking three languages, English, French, and Spanish fluently, if not always grammatically, he found himself by reason of no special merit, and no one knew exactly how or why, in the very midst of the most literary people in New York. The object of his present visit to Dr. Maxwell was to interest that gentleman in a series of lectures on Mental Science, for which he was endeavoring to secure a distinguished audience. These were to be delivered by Mrs. Felina Catsleigh, who having grown tired of unsuccessful theatrical ventures, had taken up *Metaphysics* as a means of livelihood.

Addressing Dr. Maxwell in his usual familiar manner, Alphonse begins, "This Mrs. Catsleigh beats all you've ever heard; you'll rave over her the first time you hear her, and isn't she a taking woman in a drawing-room! I don't pretend to follow her all the time, she's often too deep for me; but it's sound reasoning, I tell you, you ought to get her before the Medical Board; she'd open their eyes for them," and with this fervid eulogy of the new aspirant to fame in the ranks of "Mental Science Healing," Alphonse took from his pocket a parcel of circulars (at least 200), elegantly printed on toned paper, and about 100 tickets, pretty little conceits in embroidered cardboard, bearing the following inscription:

"*Conversations Extraordinaires*, Mme. Felina Catsleigh (of Paris) will give twelve lessons in Mental Science, teaching you how you need never be sick or unhappy, according to the latest revelation of Truth, at Poodleton Hall, W. Minerva Street, Tuesdays,

Thursdays, and Saturdays. Four weeks. First lesson, Tuesday, July 21, at 3 p.m. Tuition fee, \$25."

"Considering the season is off, the terms are very low. All the other metaphysicians charge \$50 and many of them \$100," said Alphonse, patronizingly, "you would be foolish indeed, interested as you are in such things, to miss this unique opportunity."

"Well, I will take six tickets," said Dr. Maxwell, and straightway, that gentlemen put \$150 into the palm of the courteous Alphonse, who still remained seated, and who after remarking, "mighty good bargain," handed a receipt.

Mr. Templeton watching this transaction from his corner opposite the new-comer, eyed him severely, and sternly observed: "The new gospel is not as free as the old, I take it. \$25 for twelve lectures is not a very small price to ask, I must say."

Though this remark was not intended for the ears of Alphonse, that gentleman who had cultivated his hearing as well as his sight to an unusual degree of perfection in his favorite capacity of trained spy and confidential, private detective, rose from his languorous position, and drawing himself to his full height, sneeringly replied, with a contemptuous jeer in his voice:

"You parsons are nice people to talk about a free gospel. What with your fine churches hardly ever open, and your big salaries for which you do next to nothing (I mean no offense to you personally, sir, for I don't know you), you may well try and keep people from every place of amusement, and even endeavor to stop them from hearing lectures; it's all a blind, I say, you are afraid if they gave a dollar to anybody else you would go short. As to religion, that is well enough; but when it comes to taking the bread out of the mouths of those who work hard for it, as you never do, it's another matter. What say you, Dr. Maxwell?"

"My dear sir," said the gentleman addressed, "Mr. Templeton is a minister and our guest, consequently, I think it ill becomes you to assail the profession he honors, in our house and in his presence. You cannot render a service to your own ideas by such displays of feeling. I must reserve my own opinion for a more suitable occasion, however, as I have been appealed to, I confess I do not think Mrs. Catsleigh's terms exorbitant; and I feel certain we shall receive more than our money's worth in listening to her

instructions. But pardon me, we were about to have some music when you entered. Will you not stay, and as I think it probable you are yourself a singer, may I ask you to favor us after Miss O'Shannon has given us that lovely gem of melody, Lambilotta's *chef d'œuvre*, 'O Give Me Wings'?"

Miss O'Shannon's voice was clear, sweet and musical,—not very highly cultivated, but tenderly expressive; and though she often appeared a light, frivolous girl, when she sang, her whole manner was altered; it seemed as though some wondrous inspiration fell upon her, lifting her entirely above her ordinary self, transforming her into a gifted seeress, blessed with the divine power of touching the deepest springs of human feeling through the avenues of song. When the touching strains had ended, and the breathless silence which had fallen on the company was breaking, as the fair young damsel resumed her ottoman at her mother's side, Alphonse stepped forward, and extending his hand to the lady, said in his most persuasive accents: "My dear Ma'amselle, will you not accompany me in 'Toreador?'" Receiving an approving nod from Dr. Maxwell, and "go, my child," from her mother, the gentle Lydia allowed herself to be led to the piano by Alphonse, who looking admiringly at himself in a pier glass opposite, twisted the ends of his moustuche, and adjusted his tie and watch chain, quite unnecessarily, while his accompanist was dashing off the prelude. Then bracing himself as though a bull fight were in reality about to commence, he shouted the boisterous composition of Bizet as though he was singing to an immense audience in a great opera house, apostrophizing the chandelier and waving a red silk handkerchief in his determination to act the song as well as sing it, he fairly persecuted the ear drums of his audience, who moved quickly to the furthest corners of the room while the performance lasted. Applause followed, and only too ready to accept an encore, he gave his own peculiar version of "Home Sweet Home," in a style that savored of bathos rather than pathos. His voice was undeniably powerful, and many of his tones were firm and good, but far too loud for a drawing-room, while his excessive mannerism greatly marred the effect of a vocally creditable effort. Looking unutterable things out of his coal-black eyes at the company, whom he had so graciously *deigned to delight* (to use the

language he invariably employed when puffing himself in those of the society journals to whose columns he could gain an entrance), he subsided into comparative repose on a neighboring sofa, where stretching himself at full length, he exclaimed :

"That is hard work, I tell you, I am hungry and thirsty and tired into the bargain, I suppose you have something nice going."

At these extraordinary remarks from a total stranger, Dr. Maxwell touched an electric knob, and almost instantly a page appeared bearing a tray of choice but not extravagant edibles; the conversation then took a gastronomic turn, and one of the ladies addressed Alphonse in the following terms :

"I have heard, but do not of course know how true it is, that metaphysicians can eat anything ; now I'm a martyr to indigestion and have just commenced to take electric treatment from our host, but he doesn't allow me any meat even. I am permitted to eat nothing but fruits and cereals, while my principal beverage is hot water ; what does Mrs. Catsleigh say on this subject ?"

"Well," responded that lady's representative, "you must ask her yourself, blessed if I know. When we dine together we have quail on toast, and lots of other delicacies, but sometimes when people are too nervous, she does tell them not to eat pork and shell-fish and some other things discarded by the Hebrews, of whom she seems very fond, especially when they are free with their coin."

"Excuse my interrupting you," broke in the well-modulated accents of Dr. Maxwell's always winning voice, "I do not think either of you understand what I feel to be the true position on the diet question. Mrs. O'Shannon concludes that I attach as much importance to the simple question of diet as those physicians who make obesity a specialty. I do nothing of the kind, but my studies with the learned and excellent Prof. Jerome de Montmarte in Paris, have led me to study the science of correspondences in a way slightly differing from that in which it is usually studied by the reputed disciples of Swedenborg,—a sage and seer for whom I confess unbounded respect and admiration. I feel it to be an essential factor in human development that we should accrete and absorb such of the forces of the invisible kingdoms of nature as correspond to those mental and moral traits we seek to develop,

avoiding all indulgence in such appetites as tend earthward instead of heavenward. I am no advocate of long fasts, except in exceptional cases where a temporary rest from the work of physical assimilation is imperative, but I do indeed contend that the ordinary diet of artificialization,—miscalled civilization, is simply barbaric, it having neither justification in reason nor sanction in morals."

"But what is a fellow to eat?" questioned Alphonse, excitedly. "You don't expect us to subsist on roots and uncooked grains like some people who called at our rooms the other day and asked me to distribute 'Korokoo-heshun' literature among Mrs. Catsleigh's students?"

"Pardon me, my dear sir," replied the doctor, smiling. "I have no sympathy with fanatical extremists, and I consider cooked food in proper quantities and of the right kind, advantageous to us all as we are at present situated. I do not even banish meats entirely from my table, though I very rarely eat meat myself, and I induce all my patients to gradually break away from it, but the point I am aiming at is that there is a science of feeding as well as of everything else, and this science like all true sciences, has its foundation in *spiritual* not in *physical* chemistry. I hold that under extreme pressure of need, or in a state of unusually exalted spiritual feeling, the influence of anything and everything usually deleterious in its effects upon the human organism, can be successfully resisted; but under ordinary circumstances it is disorderly and absurd to tell people to eat and drink *anything* and *everything* because such words to the majority justify unlimited physical license. I do not say that the teachers and practitioners of 'Christian Science,' are other than extremely temperate in their demands and habits in such respects, but if they are bent on elevating the race, they must seek to wean people from excesses, not teach so as to imply their justification. I shall take the liberty of questioning Mrs. Catsleigh on these points as soon as she gives me an opening by raising them in her lessons, which I shall attend faithfully, with a view of learning all I possibly can of the system, of which, from all I hear, she is a brilliant and successful advocate."

"Oh, you and she will get on first rate," responded her agent, enthusiastically, "she always enjoys talking with doctors who

know something, and I don't see that you and she are far apart in theory, whatever you may be in practice, but, bless me, it's 10:30, I must be going: I've three more engagements to-night, so *ta ta*." And with this unceremonious leave-taking, accompanied, however, by a profound and not ungraceful bow, the irrepressible Alphonse departed for pastures new.

As soon as he was gone the party drew themselves together in the pretty room, which was unusually attractive when softly illumined by electricity, and as though feeling some subtle sense of an invisible presence brooding near, all sat in profound silence for about five minutes, after which a soft, bird-like voice was heard piping in the room as though a telephone connected the apartment with some distant *salon*. No material telephone however, communicated with Prof. de Montmarte's Parisian residence, and it was the voice of his charming daughter, Heloise, which vibrated through the room in clear, penetrating accents. Mr. Templeton appeared thunderstruck: Mrs. O'Shannon visibly started. Dr. Maxwell listened quietly as though thoroughly used to such experiences, while Lydia gently rose, and taking her seat at the piano, began playing as she had never played before, a soft, dreamy composition of Schumann, the favorite composer of the lovely Heloise, whom she had never seen.*

As soon as Lydia rose from the instrument, the mystical, yet quite natural tones of the unseen visitor's voice spoke in the following words:

"I who am bodily asleep in Paris have been commissioned to visit you this evening and declare my presence thus, that our new friend (indicating Mr. Templeton) may know that the deep secret of his soul is not a secret to those who constitute the circle to which he belongs, though quite unconsciously to himself, save when an occasional glimpse behind the veil of man-made dogma permits him to gaze upon the spiritual temple of which the purest visible church is but a shadow. In a few months from now the bonds will be broken, the letter will be cast aside and the spirit revealed. You, my friend (addressing Mr. Templeton personally), have been

*The reader must bear in mind that the O'Shannon's were on a visit to Dr. Maxwell, and knew none of his European friends, indeed, they had never crossed the Atlantic. Heloise and her father had never met them in America.

reading Swedenborg in secret. You have pondered and prayed over the *Arcana Celestia* and *Apocalypse Unveiled*; you have struggled with doubts innumerable, and have counted it sin to question the interpretation put upon Scripture by your own and other evangelical sects: but light is to come to you very shortly, and through your own individual experience will you be led to cast aside all fetters of dead literalism and preach the gospel as its spirit is revealed to you."

To say that Mr. Templeton was startled would be to utterly fail to describe a tithe of his palpable emotion. He was literally convulsed with wonder; his agitation knew no bounds, and rising suddenly to his feet, he cried impetuously in his loudest tone, "My God, if this be true, how blind I have been in fighting it. Swedenborg's works, the very volumes alluded to by this mysterious, unseen speaker, are in my bureau drawer at home in Saddlerock, Vermont. I took them from a member of my congregation unknowingly, for when she moved to Boston she gave me all her theological library; these two books were among her collection; they were uncut and had evidently never been read—hardly noticed. Not feeling they were suitable for general perusal by my visitors, I took them to my chamber and locked them up among my private papers. They some way fascinated me, and I have been for some time past reading them nightly prior to retiring. This practice I only discontinued three days ago when I came to visit you on my summer vacation while my church is closed for renovation."

Once again the clear voice rang out through the apartment, "Have no fear, truth will not ask any of you to be its martyrs, though it calls on you all to be its fearless, tireless advocates. My father requests you to assemble here next Sunday at 10 P.M., to hold an electric *seance*, when I trust the truth of spiritual telegraphy will be yet more convincingly revealed to you. God's blessing is over you. I do not invoke it, I declare it."

As the clear, bell-like utterance subsided into silence, the household at 312 Sycamore Avenue felt a delightful sensation of rest steal over its every member, and seeking their respective couches did not find "balmy slumber" difficult to woo.

(Continued next month).

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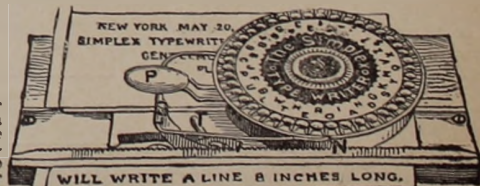
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